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**HOUSE BILL 1924**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Hargrove, Farrell, Zeiger, Blake, Rodne, Kochmar, and Tarleton

AN ACT Relating to adding elected members to regional transit authority boards; amending RCW 81.112.040; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that the public is interested in having representation on the sound transit board that is directly accountable to the people. The legislature intends this act to address this concern by providing direct representation through elected representatives from each county in the sound transit service area.

**Sec.**  RCW 81.112.040 and 1994 c 109 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The regional transit authority shall be governed by a board consisting of: Representatives appointed by the county executive and confirmed by the council or other legislative authority of each member county, and elected members. Appointed membership shall be based on population from that portion of each county which lies within the service area. Appointed board members shall be appointed initially on the basis of one for each one hundred forty-five thousand population within the county. Such appointments shall be made following consultation with city and town jurisdictions within the service area. Elected board members will represent each of the counties within the regional transit authority service area, and each such county must elect one board member only on a nonpartisan basis in accordance with the general election laws. In addition, the secretary of transportation or the secretary's designee shall serve as a member of the board and may have voting status with approval of a majority of the other members of the board. Only board members, not including alternates or designees, may cast votes.

(a)(i) Each appointed member of the board, except the secretary of transportation or the secretary's designee, shall be:

((~~(a)~~))(A) An elected official who serves on the legislative authority of a city or as mayor of a city within the boundaries of the authority;

((~~(b)~~))(B) On the legislative authority of the county, if fifty percent of the population of the legislative official's district is within the authority boundaries; or

((~~(c)~~))(C) A county executive from a member county within the authority boundaries.

(ii) When making appointments, each county executive shall ensure that representation on the board includes an elected city official representing the largest city in each county and assures proportional representation from other cities, and representation from unincorporated areas of each county within the service area. At least one-half of all appointees from each county shall serve on the governing authority of a public transportation system.

(iii) Members appointed from each county shall serve staggered four-year terms. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment for the remainder of the unexpired term of the position being vacated.

(iv) The appointed members of the governing board shall be reconstituted, with regard to the number of representatives from each county, on a population basis, using the official office of financial management population estimates, five years after its initial formation and, at minimum, in the year following each official federal census.

(b)(i) The regional transit authority must schedule an election of the board at the next presidential election, and each subsequent presidential election. The election of the board must comply with Title 29A RCW.

(ii) One board member must be elected on a nonpartisan basis from each of the counties within the regional transit authority service area. Only registered voters of a county may vote for the board member candidate for that county.

(iii) Each person elected as a board member must be elected to a four-year term of office. Each board member must serve until a successor is elected and qualified and assumes office.

(iv) In case of a vacancy of an elected member, a majority of the county council in the county that the elected member represents must fill the vacancy by appointment within ninety days. An appointee to fill a vacancy must meet the requirements provided by law and must serve until the next general election, at which time a successor must be elected for the remainder of the term.

(c) The board membership may be reduced, maintained, or expanded to reflect population changes but under no circumstances may the board membership exceed twenty-five.

(2) Major decisions of the authority shall require a favorable vote of two-thirds of the entire membership of the voting members. "Major decisions" include at least the following: System plan adoption and amendment; system phasing decisions; annual budget adoption; authorization of annexations; modification of board composition; and executive director employment.

(3) Each member of the board is eligible to be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060 and to receive compensation as provided in RCW 43.03.250.

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